The Shakespeare Newsletter

Vol. V, No. 2 | *"Knowing I lov'd my books, he furnish'd me . . ."* | April, 1955

Fourth Antioch Shakespeare Festival Planned; TNK To Be Offered

Seven plays are scheduled for the 4th ambitious season of the Antioch Area Theatre Shakespeare Festival at Antioch College, Yellow Springs, Ohio. The eleven week outdoor festival opens on June 29 with *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and offers additional plays on succeeding Wednesdays. *As You Like It* will open on July 6, *Twelfth Night* - July 13, *Macbeth* - July 20, *Cymbeline* - July 27, *Winter's Tale* - Aug. 3, and *The Two Noble Kinsmen* on Aug. 10 .The *Grand Repertoire* featuring a different play daily will run from August 15 to September 11. Production dates are so arranged that week-end visitors will be able to see three or four plays by mid-July.

Managing Director Arthur Lithgow expects that attendance for the 4th season will push the 4 year total well over the 100,000 mark. In 1952 the plays attracted 15,000; in 1953, 22,000; and in 1954, over 37,000. The five year plan to present the works of Shakespeare will end in 1956 and make the Area Theatre the first in the U. S. to produce all the plays.

The plays are presented on a specially designed apron-type stage which juts into the audience which partially surrounds it.

Complete details will be announced in the May issue.

PHILIP WILLIAMS, 1918-1955

The scholarly world, suffered a loss in the untimely death on March 16 of Philip Williams of the University of Virginia. He was thirty-seven years old.

Dr. Williams received his B. A. and M. A. at Washington and Lee University, served as a Navy officer for four years, and then earned his Ph. D. at the University of Virginia in 1949. After teaching at Duke University he returned to the University of Virginia as an associate professor last September.

Dr. Williams held offices in the Modern Language Association and the Renaissance Association of the Southeastern States. He made important contributions to the field of bibliography and his death cut short what Fredson Bowers called "notably original work" and was " a great loss to Shakespearean scholarship."

Dr. A. B. Shepperson, Chairman of the English Department called him "one of the most valuable and able men who has joined the department in many years."

Sixth Hofstra Festival Features Othello

Seven performances of *Othello* from May 2 to May 8 will be the chief feature of the 6th Annual Shakespeare Festival at Hofstra College, Hempstead, Long Island. The play starring Hyman A. Enger, head of the Journalism Department, will be directed by Bernard Beckerman on the "replica" of the Globe stage designed by Dr. John Cranford Adams, President of the college.

Speakers at the annual Symposium on May 7 will include Professors Oscar James Campbell and Eric Bentley of Columbia University.

Canadian Festival Advance Sales Herald Third Successful Season

With casting already complete and the three-and-a-half ton canvas tent already in position, plans for the third Stratford Shakepearean Festival are moving forward rapidly.

From over 250 applications, Dr. Tyrone Guthrie has selected the students who will study theatre and act in the Festival plays.

Costuming this elaborate Festival is a sizeable undertaking. From 2300 yards of theatrical materials 230 costumes must be prepared by the opening date on June 27. Tanya Moiseiwitsch has created a full panoply of banners, armour, headdress, and other costumes for *Julius Caesar*. For *The Merchant of Venice*, costumes having a "fairy tale quality" will give an Arabian Nights effect with a definite Eastern flavor. They will be the richest and most elaborate period costumes yet designed for the Festival. A costume fitting program calls for ten fittings per day from rehearsal opening on May 16 to curtain time.

From the thousands of ticket requests already on hand it is apparent that another successful season is in the making. Requests for seats have come from far and wide. Demands for blocks of seats come from individuals, from groups coming in bus-loads, and from organizations that have charted trains to carry as many as 500 of their members to various performances.

The Music Festival running from July 9 to Auguest 6 is also attracting a large advance sale.

Festival organizer Tom Patterson, meanwhile, has returned from a six week tour during which he spoke at Yale, Stratford (Conn.), New York, and other places describing the growth, development, and future of the Festival.

Wins Shakespeare Club of N. Y. Award

Additional evidence of the success of the venture is revealed by announcement that the Shakespeare Club of New York has awarded the Festival its annual award for "meritorious contribution in promoting interest in the performed work of William Shakespeare." Commenting on the award President Alfred M. Bell of the Festival Foundation declared that it was "extremely gratifying. . .to receive the recognition" and called it "an encouraging milestone in our career." Official presentation of the award was made at the club's Annual Anniversary dinner in New York on April 24.

OLD VIC COMPANY PLANS AUSTRALIAN TOUR

As Old Vic prepares to close (on June 11) the second season of its five year plan to produce the Shakespeare canon, it is already preparing for a two week session at the Opera House in Belfast and a six months tour of Australia.

One of the most popular plays of the current London season is Michael Benthall's production of *Macbeth* which will reach 100 performances before the season ends. Only three other British *Macbeth's* have run longer: Gielgud's at the Piccadilly in 1942, 109 performances; 100 at His Majesty's theatre in 1911; and 151 at the Lyceum in 1888 during Irving's spectacular reign.

The Taming of the Shrew has had an interesting history. Unpopular when it opened in November, revisions were made which included dropping the Induction and rearrangement into two parts rather than three. The play then concluded a successful run. The last two plays of the season are 1-2 *Henry IV* in a text edited by Sir Barry Jackson.

A special cast for the Australian tour is headed by Katherine Hepburn and Robert Helpmann. The repertoire directed by Michael Benthall consists of *The Merchant of Venice, Taming of the Shrew*, and *Measure for Measure*. The tour will open in Sydney on May 14 and end on Nov. 12 at Perth.

Oregon Festival Already Ahead of '54 Ticket Sales

The Oregon Shakespeare Festival at Ashland, Oregon, moved forward in its four play program by appointing a new director for 1955.

Dr. Robert B. Loper of Stanford University's Speech and Drama Department brings wide acting and directing experience in addition to a Ph. D. from the University of Birmingham and two years of study at Stratford-upon-Avon. He will direct *All's Well that Ends Well* and *Timon of Athens*. Other directors for the season are the veterans H. Paul Kliss for *Macbeth* and James Sandoe for *Henry VI and A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

The Music Festival will be expanded by weekly concerts, strolling players, and dancing, part of it in connection with the annual Tudor Fair.

For visitors to the Festival an extensive program of planned entertainment is scheduled. Back stage, scenic, "nature", and historic tours are planned.

FOLGER SHAKESPEARE LIBRARY AWARDS TWO $1000 PRIZES

A book analyzing cryptographic evidence of authorship in Shakespeare's works has won the $1000 literature award offered by the Folger Shakespeare Library. The announcement was made on April 3 by Dr. Louis B. Wright, director of the Library.

The prize was offered in 1951 [Cf. *SNL*, I:6 (Nov. 1951), 23] for a "manuscript of a book in the field of English literature of the 16th and 17th centuries, or in the history of the English drama and theatre of the 18th century, or in the interpretation of Shakespeare, and the history of his reputation and the performance of his plays in any period."

"The Cryptologist Looks at Shakespeare"

The coveted prize was won by Col. and Mrs. William F. Friedman of Washington, D. C., for their manuscript tentatively entitled *The Cryptologist Looks at Shakespeare*. Both Col. and Mrs. Friedman are noted cryptologists. Col. Friedman has received the nation's highest civilian award – the Medal for Merit—for distinguished work in his field during the war. He has served in the Department of Defense and is author of technical treatises on cryptography and cryptanalysis. Mrs. Friendman has assisted her husband in his professional work. The prize volume is described as "an objective analysis of theories proposed over a long period of years by people who have thought they could find cryptographic evidence of authorship in the works of William Shakespeare." The authors have analyzed theories from their professional point of view without engaging in controversy. Publication plans have not yet been announced.

Honorable Mention

Honorable Mention in the literature field was awarded for two additional manuscripts. Professor Roland Mushat Frye of Emory University, a contributor to scholarly publications and a Contributing Editor of *SNL* was cited for his manuscript entitled *Romeo and Juliet: A Tragedy in Self-Damnation*. Similarly cited for their manuscript entitled *The Eighteenth-Century Stage* were Professors George Winchester Stone, Jr., of George Washington University, A. H. Scouten of the University of Pennsylvania, and Emmett L. Avery of the State College of Washington.

History of Civilization Award

The $1000 prize for a manuscript in the "history of English civilzation in the period between 1500 and 1700" was awarded to Dr. Conyers Read, Professor - Emeritus of the University of Pennsylvania for his book entitled *Mr. Secretary Cecil and Queen Elizabeth*. A second volume is also being completed by Dr. Read.

BULLETIN

The American Shakespeare Festival at Stratford, Conn., opens on July 12 with *Julius Caesar* and *The Tempest*.

An Editorial—

"Official" Shakespeare

College English for February, 1955, (XVI:5, p. 318) contains the following Resolution prepared for adoption by the National Council of Teachers of English.

WHEREAS, Shakespeare is the dominating figure in English literature, and

WHEREAS, his plays are best seen and heard on the stage, be it

Resolved, That the National Council of Teachers of English approve the plans for a proposed American Shakespeare Festival Theatre in Stratford, Connecticut, as a memorial to the Bard, and commend most heartily the several significant programs throughout the country for bringing Shakespearean drama to youth, such as the fourteen season old Shakespeare Festival in Ashland, Oregon, and the annual theatre in Stratford, Ontario, Canada.

From the wording of this Resolution it appears that adoption would make the Connecticut festival the "official" memorial to Shakespeare in America while the others are merely to be commended.

Mr. Lawrence Langner who is President of the Ameican Shakespeare Festival Theatre and Academy might say that "this is an honor I dream not of," but he would no doubt welcome it as fitting in with his obvious plan to make all American Shakespeare subservient to the ASFTA.

Certainly the ASFTA deserves our support. Several hundred thousand dollars have already been donated under the spell of Shakespeare's name. That the organization is destined to do outstanding work is comcommitant with the amount of unshared profit it will have at its disposal to attract great actors and directors.

But to designate this as the quasi-official American memorial to Shakespeare with the full santion of so august a body as the NCTE is unwarranted and unnecessary.

The United States is too big for a centralized home for Shakespeare. Why make Shakespeareans feel that they haven't seen Shakespeare because they haven't made the pilgrimage to Connecticut? Only a cusory look at Mary Hyde's list of productions of Shakespeare all over the world shows us that Shakespeare needs and wants no central "home" (*SQ*, VI:1 (Winter 1955), pp. 67-88). Forty colleges produce a Shakespeare play every year and more than four time that number have produced at least one play in the last four years. There were over 300 productions last season! But there are those who think that if a play is not produced on Broadway it is not a play, nor do they consider the City Center - just a few blocks away - a Broadway playhouse. Short productions are "flops" and college productions of no significance.

"What needs my Shakespeare . . . "

Is it not, therefore, an overstatement to say—we quote an official statement in a *New York Times* editorial of July 29, 1951 - that the ASFTA will revive "the lost art of Shakespearean acting . . . [and] we will give Shakespeare a home in American to keep his plays alive"? Indeed!

Will this or any particular Festival represent what , to speak vaguely, we might call the *true* Shakespeare? Each of us has most likely seen too many Shakespearean plays where the individuality of producers, directors, and designers was of greater concern than Shakespeare. We know many who agree that the best Shakespeare is frequently seen in the *smaller* theatres and at festivals where directors and actors feel that their individuality is *less important* than Shakespeare's.

The ASFTA will be as representative of American Shakespeare as the individuality of its artists and teachers. The fear has recently been expressed that the ASFTA will be controlled to some extent by Old Vic and the Memorial Theatre at Stratford. The importing of Old Vic's John Burrell as Director of the Acadamy already indicates that the English "tradition" is to be fundamental and that good American Shakespeare and good English Shakespeare are really one. And will the ASFTA be able to resist the temptation to import the Olivier's and Gielgud and Guinness, and others? And will this be American Shakespeare? Or will it develop its own American stars? The future will tell. Meanwhile it is premature to say or imply before the whole United States and the whole world that this Festival will represent the home of Shakespeare in America. Such honor is not to be assumed by the ASFTA nor bestowed by the NCTE but rather to be achieved by many years of successful production and national emulation.

Kansas City TV's Shakespeare

A new weekly "telecourse" called "You and Shakespeare" was inaugurated by the University of Kansas City on Feb. 5 over station WKAF-TV, Kansas City, Missouri. The eighteen week course is being conducted by Professor Emeritus Carolyn Benton Cockefair in an informal setting around a fireplace. A model of the Globe stands close by and copies of F1 and F2 decorate the mantle over which hangs a new portrait of Shakespeare. Film shorts made by famous Shakespearean actors, miscellaneous pictures, and scenes acted by high school and college students illustrate the course.

For those who register- (the fee is $16)- one credit hour will be granted if assignments are completed and an examination passed. The course is planned to run for three semesters.

Mrs. Cockefair who previously conducted an award-winning radio program called "Let's Think for Ourselves" writes that there has been "unexpected response" from the audience.

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Utica's 3rd Sucessful TV Shakespeare

The Shakespeare on Television program WK-TV Utica, N. Y.) conducted by Dr. Norman Nathan of Utica College of Syracuse University is now concluding its 3rd successful fifteen week program and is therefore probably the most extensive program ever offered in this manner. Plays discussed in the current season are *As You Like It, HV, Othello,* and *King Lear.* The previous seasons included *TN, R&J, J. C., Hamlet, MND, Temp, RIII* and *Macbeth.* A satisfactory audience response continues even though the program was moved from Tuesday afternoon to Friday morning.

A syllabus is offered to televiewers whose appreciation is not only vitalized by discussions of the plays as "plays", but also as they reflect good and evil, royalty, character, poetry, audience, stage limitations, Elizabethan life in general, etc. A novel feature was introduced when Dr. Nathan prepared from rare volumes a five page leaflet of "Elizabethan Deserts" for distribution to his predominantly female audience. *SNL's* mouth watering readers are invited to request copies.

Although it is ordinarily impossible to estimate the influence of such programs, a definate result is seen in the fact that several students in Dr. Nathan's evening Shakespeare classes are "graduates" of the TV audience.

Noble Precedent

Dad: Don't use those words.
Son: But Shakespeare uses them.
Dad: Well, don't play with him any more!

The Shakespearean Moment *and Its Place in the Poetry of the 17th Century*

PATRICK CRUTTWELL

Mr. Cruttwell traces the poetic revolution to a "shift of thought and feeling in society itself," examines its effects upon style and subject matter, and follows its repercussions in the poetry of the 17th century. Whether he is discussing the "railing" spirit in some of Shakespeare's sonnets, the resemblances between Shakespeare and Donne, the conflict between theological and poetico-humanist values, or the skeptical, rationalist outlook as typified by Herbert of Cherbury, Mr. Cruttwell always has something interesting to say, and he says it freshly, with an enthusiasm for his subject and a firm grasp of the interaction between life and literature. $3.75

Middleton's Tragedies

A Critical Study

SAMUEL SCHOENBAUM

This is the first full-length study of the tragedies of Thomas Middleton and the first comprehensive analysis of the canon. **The Revenger's Tragedy; The Second Maiden's Tragedy; Hengist, King of Kent; Women Beware Women;** and **The Changeling** are treated exhaustively. The scope of the treatment is broad enough to include a discussion of many other important and relevant matters in the Italy of the Elizabethans, sexual preoccupation in Jacobean drama, etc. A truly significant volume on the Jacobean drama. $4.50

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRESS
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A Letter to the Editor:

AMERICAN SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL THEATRE & ACADEMY

April 11, 1955

Dear Mr. Marder:

May I add the following remarks on the subject of Dr. Hotson's "First Night of Twelfth Night."

One of the problems of "theatre in the round" is that the actors have to turn their backs on one portion of the audience in order that other people may see and hear. Do you suppose for one moment that if "Twelfth Night" were given with Queen Elizabeth sitting in front of the fireplace in a large, cold, drafty hall, the actors would dare to turn their backs on her? And then the absurd idea that Shakespeare could have written this play in a few days. It would hardly have been possible to copy out the parts in this time, much less create them, learn them, and act them. Dr. Hotson shows that he knows little about the living theatre when he makes such an unsound guess. Most of Dr. Hotson's arguare based on subjective thinking. He first propounds a theory and then tries to make the facts fit the theory. If his theory is correct, that the real Orsino was invited as a guest to see this play, it is perfectly obvious to anyone in the theatre that the name of the character could have been changed to Orsino, as a compliment to the real Orsino. This makes sense whereas Dr. Hotson's conclusions do not.

Dr. Hotson's ideas about Shakespeare's scenery are equally incongrous. In order to fit into this theory about "theatre in the round," he is forced to go to extravagant extremes.

All praises to Dr. Hotson for creating interest in the subject, and for doing a magnificent piece of research. My hat is off to him, because he is one of the most exciting scholars writing about Shakespeare today. I wish he would do the same kind of treatment on all of Shakespeare's plays and I would forgive him his practical mistakes in return for his imaginative research.

Cordially yours,
Lawrence Langner
The Theatre Guild

[Mr. Langner is President of the ASFTA.]

Hotson, Leslie. The First Night of "Twelfth Night." New York, Macmillan, 1954. $4.50.

"Excitement quickens the pulse as we accompany Hoston...as...he recreates the events of the climatic day and night of the Christmas festivities" when the play performed for the Queen may have been *Twelfth Night.* "The experts will have a merry time testing the strength of large and small limbs out on which Hotson has climbed, some of which are pretty sure to be sawed off or at least pruned radically. But everyone who likes a racily told story about V. I. P.'s should read 'The First Night of "Twelfth Night."'"

James G. McManaway *N. Y. Times Bk R,* (Dec. 12 '54), 4 & 29.

"This book won the 1953 MLA-Macmillan award for research contributing most to the understanding of English or American literature. Hotson nosed out evidence that Twelfth Night was first performed . . . on January 6, 1601, on a stage in the *center* of the Great Hall of Whitehall Palace...to honor Elizabeth's Italian visitor...Don Virginio Orsino.... Hotson makes his whole narrative of his research and of Orsino's visit colorful and lively."

Anonymous *Col Eng,* XVI:4 (Jan. '54), 258.

Hamlet Bibliographer Dies

Professor Anton A. Raven, author of *A Hamlet Bibiliography and Reference Guide,* 1877-1935, Chicago, 1936, died last March 7 at the age of 59. Prof. Raven had studied at Rutgers and Harvard and had been at Dartmouth College since 1919 where he attained the rank of Chairman and Professor of English. His 237 page bibliography listed 2167 references to *Hamlet* supplementing the approximate 1100 items mentioned in the Variorum *Hamlet.* Among other bequests Prof. Raven left the college $300,000.

Decentralized Staging

William F. Rothwell, Jr., University of California

There is, of course, something to be said for a centrally-placed stage was erected at court and always the case? Investigation of productional methods up to 1598 has convinced me that there must have been a certain diversity of staging. As far as the courtly drama is concerned there is, to begin with, the matter of sight lines to be considered. Mr. Hotson notes that the houses could be placed either side of the stage — at the ends, as it were — to allow for a large acting space and for visibility on the part of the spectators. There is one instance where this was done at the universities (where staging methods were similar to those at court); there may have been a similar instance at court.

Position of the Stage

But it must be wondered if the houses were always situated in this manner. The houses for the court plays were, before 1598, of some size, if the amounts of cloth and wood that went into their construction are any indication as to dimension. If the stage was centerally placed, and the spectators surrounded it on all sides, large houses would surely have interfered with the vision of a number of the spectators. Moreover, it is quite possible, if not probable, (as A. M. Nagler suggests in his recent article in The *Shakespeare Quarterly IV,* (Autumn 1954) pp. 359 ff.] that sometimes a perspective backcloth may have been used, and the stage setting may have resembled that section of the *Ballet Comique de la Reine* (Paris, 1581) wherein the realm of Circe was placed at one end of the hall.

Position of the Audience

Of course, any kind of stage involving the use of perspective scenery would surely change the disposition of the audience; the spectators would tend to face rather than surround the stage on all sides. Mr. Hotson notes, too, that there was no stage at the end of the hall at court until 1665. If we can believe the words of Orazio Busino, there was a stage set at the end for the masque, *Pleasure Reconciled to Virtue,* in 1618. Moreover, the plans for Inigo Jones' *Florimene* in 1635 definitely show the stage at one end of the hall; and it is only likely that in his other productions, in which perspective played a role, the same wa ssimilarly placed. It is true that, for the occasions cited, masques and not plays were presented; but Allardyce Nicoll pointed out (*The Development of the Theatre,* pp. 130-131) that even plays were presented at court prior to 1642 with perspective settings. In such cases, the stage must have been placed at one end of the hall, as may have been done earlier in the reign of Elizabeth; or the audience must have been so disposed that it did not surround the stage on all sides. Consequently, if one takes into account the size of the houses, the elements of perspective scenery that may have been present, and the fact that actors of any age like a background, it does not seem possible that, at court, arena staging, and only arena staging, prevailed at all times.

The Public Stage "Houses"

As for the public theatres, there again I cannot accept the theory of central staging *in toto.* Before 1598 a number of plays were presented with little or nothing in the way of what we should call production. And even where a house or houses seem requisite to the action, it may be wondered if, in all cases, the companies could have afforded the number of varied houses needed for true multiple settings. I could not see, even for examination of Henslowe's Inventory, that such was inevitably the practice. As C. Walter Hodges points out, perhaps a house may have been erected on the stage and this, may have served instead of number of houses. Some theatres may have possessed such a superstructure; others, notably the Swan, may have not. Where the house was available, it could have been used to symbolize a number of houses in succession: where there was no house, small properties might have been brought into play; occasionally, perhaps, one house or more than one (as in the case of the tents of *Richard III*) may have been set up at the back of the stage; and the doors in the back wall (as at the Swan) may have had a connotative value as far as the setting was concerned, serving first as one house and then as another. Besides, in the public playhouses, as at court, houses of some sizs (and one of them seems to have contained as many as eleven actors) would have interfered with sight lines if set up on the sides of the stage.

Diversity the Rule

I therefore do not feel inclined to agree with Mr. Hotson that the plays at the public theatres were invariably produced in accordance with the ideas of central staging. I do certainly agree with him that there was no such thing as the so-called alcove or inner stage, at least before 1598. But Mr. Hodges has anticipated him in this. I can only conclude that diversity in staging, as at court, must have been the rule in the public theatres; and, if central staging may have been practiced, it was done more in spirit than in actuality, and was not the general rule.

Dr. Rothwell's Yale dissertation abstract on Elizabethan production methods appears on p. 13. He is now in the Department of Dramatic Arts in Berkeley.

Leslie Hotson's Twelfth Night

Has Leslie Hotson proved that the first night of *Twelfth Night* was January 6th 1600? Sidney Race does not think that he has. Mr. Race is very much interested in Dr. Hotson's discoveries: (1) the Alnwick documents, which contain a description of Elizabeth's festivities at Whitehall by which she entertained the Russian Ambassador and the Italian Duke Orsino and a copy of the original memoranda of Lord Chamberlain Hunsdon of things to be done to carry on this entertainment, together with the names of the noblemen in attendance and (2) the two letters from Orsino to his wife in which he describes his entertainment at the English court. But Mr. Race finds the following flaws in Hotson's argument: 1. Hotson always refers to the Lord Chamberlain's company as Shakespeare's company, though Shakespeare's name is not mentioned in the records of the period. 2. He says nothing about the disappearance of the original memoranda and does not explain the misdating of the copy—1601-2 instead of 1600-1. 3. He insists that Shakespeare wrote the play after notice of Orsino's impending visit had reached London on Dec. 26th. This leaves eleven days for composition, casting, staging, costuming, and memorizing of roles. Hotson cites the story, not printed until a hundred years after Shakespeare's death, that *The Merry Wives of Windsor* was written in ten days. *Twelfth Night,* Mr. Race believes, bears no appearance of having been composed in haste. 4. Neither the Alnwick documents nor Orsino's letters describe the play performed by the Lord Chamberlain's company. 5. Certain of his identification of the play, Hotson argues that Olivia "is a shadow of the Queen in her youth" and that Sebastian and Viola were put into the comedy because the visitor from Italy had twin children ten years old. He fails to observe that the Count, almost forty years younger than the Queen would have been very unlikely to recognize these portraits of himself and Elizabeth, particularly in view of the fact that he could not understand English.

"Some play, or some part of one, was performed before Queen Elizabeth on twelfth night 1600," says Mr. Race, "but what that play was the documents found by Dr. Hotson do not tell. The very thing the book sets out to prove has not been proved. It is most disappointing." ["The First Night of 'Twelfth Night,'" *Notes and Queries,* New Series II:2 (February 1955),52-5.]

Dissertation Digest

COMPLETED DISSERTATIONS

Edited by
Neille Shoemaker, Baldwin-Wallace College

Methods of Production in the English Theatre from 1550 to 1598, William F. Rothwell, Jr., Yale University, 1953, pp. 463.

The dissertation examines all of the plays produced in England from the late Middle Ages to 1598. Particular attention was paid to the ways in which the religious plays, processional and stationary, the civic pageants, the masques, and the interludes were produced prior to Elizabeth's accession. In connection with this, the various theatres and stages were examined and Italian Renaissance concepts of staging were discussed to see whether they might have influenced production methods in England. The study is divided into two sections, one dealing with the courtly theatre (that involving the court, the schools, and the private theatres) and the other dealing with public theatres after 1558. For the courtly drama, it was found that Italian concepts, including the use of perspective backcloths and facade-type houses (as well as the limitation of the setting to one locale) may have been known, but that a complete Serlian setting did not exist. Traditional methods, making use of the multiple setting with its houses that disclosed an interior to the spectators, generally prevailed. As for the public theatres, it was noted that the stage was derived, perhaps, from the stage of the processional mystery plays, with its main pageant (upon which houses may have been erected) and its forepageant, or neutral playing area. The influence of the simple methods prevalent in staging the interludes was also taken into account. It was found that there was no one type of stage, and that there was a certain variety of method in producing the plays, but that mainly traditional ways were followed and Italian influence was at a minimum. In sum, traditional and native methods predominated in both courtly and public theatres, though symbolism was, perhaps, much stronger on the stages of the public houses than it was at the court, the schools, and the private theatres.

The Kydian Revenge Play, John David Ratliff, Stanford University, 1954, pp. 465.

A total of ten Elizabethan plays are analyzed to show the revenge pattern which runs through them. The author's major thesis is that the revenge plot and machinery is the creation of Kyd and his first scene in the *Ur-Hamlet* and *The Spanish Tragedy*. With the completion of these two plays the revenge technique had been established and, although there were some later changes, remained the basis for Elizabethan revenge drama. The two chief sources for the revenge motif were Seneca and Belleforest. The latter is of great importance because he furnished the chief characteristics of the revenge plot. From him Kyd took the idea of a long period of delay. This delay is necessitated by the employment of three time sequences. The first of these is the period devoted to the accusation. This period is extended because the hero cannot take action without further proof. The second time period makes use of the idea of confirmation and a fresh resolve to take action. At this point the idea of confrontation enters the plot. The hero is confronted with one of two situations or both. He first may face a delay caused by his system of ethics. (As for example, Hamlet's delay in the prayer scene.) Or he may be delayed by matters which are not capable of being executed at the moment, as was Hamlet when he was sent to England soon after the mouse trap episode. Obviously *Hamlet* is the chief Shakesperean play which was influenced by the Kydian idea of revenge. *Titus Andronicus* is also discussed as being one of the ten Elizabethan plays especially influenced by the revenge technique.

DISSERTATIONS & WORKS IN PROGRESS

Edited by
William White, Wayne University

A Study of Imagery in Twelfth Night, Paul Barton, University of Washington (U. S. Naval Academy).

The Concept of War and Peace in Shakespeare, Marianne T. Burke, University of Tennessee.

Tragic Love in Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet, Antony and Cleopatra, and Troilus and Cressida, Franklin Dickey, University of Michigan.

King Lear: A Study in Religious Backgrounds, William Elton, Ohio State University

The Problem of Time in Shakespeare's Plays, Oscar Gertner, Rutgers University.

Shakespeare's Poetry of Ritual, Robert Hapgood, University of Californina.

Symbolic Meaning in Shakespeare's Later Plays, F. D. Hoeniger, University of Toronto.

The Convention of Scenic Description in Shakespeare, Ruth S. Cottridge, Harvard.

Shakespeare's Early Comedies, James B. Meriwether, Princeton University.

Shakespeare in Mormon Culture, Leland Monson, University of Utah.

Shakespeare's Dramatic Uses of the Supernatural, Armour H. Nelson, University of Chicago.

Shakespeare's Dramatic Treatment of Repentance, Eleanor Prosser, Stanford University.

A Contextual Examination of Critical Terms and Concepts in the Shakespeare Canon, with the setting of Renaissance Rhetorical and Poetic Theory, Lawrence J. Ross, Princeton University.

Platonism in Shakespeare, Jack Suberman, University of North Carolina.

The Family of Mercutio, Archibald Henderson Jr., Columbia University, 1954, pp. 270.

Before dealing with Shakespeare's use of female baiting the author gives a brief history of pre-Shakespearean love mockery and anti-female literature, from the 14th Century to the Renaissance. The first instance given is that of Dioneo in the *Decameron*. Chaucer made use of Troilus as anti-Roman until he became the hero and fell in love. Sometimes the love baiter falls in love with the girl he has previously berated and sometimes he remains constant in his mockery. A chief characteristic of the mocker in pre-Shakesperean literature is that he was a *talker* only. Shakespeare placed him in the middle of the action and gave him not only a sharp tongue but also a considerable part in the story. A good example is Mercutio, who first ridicules Romeo's love and then takes a vital role in the action and becomes a cause for Romeo's banishment. Berowne is *Love's Labors Lost* is also vital to the action of the play. Benedict is a part of the main plot and in addition has the clever tongue of the pre-Shakesperean mocker who after berating the female decides to marry her. Iago is a mocker but for different reasons. All in all Shakespeare remains in the central tradition of love literature which creates the female baiter. A chief fact in Shakespeare's use of the character is that he becomes more than a user of words.

The Double Hunt of Love: A Study of Shakespeare's Venus and Adonis as a Christian Mythological Narrative, Robert P. Miller, Princeton University, 1954, pp. 587.

In *Venus and Adonis* Shakespeare performed the double feat of interpreting Ovid according to the Renaissance concept of Christianity and at the same time keeping the true pagan spirit. Both the hero and the heroine are developed according to Christian concepts and the mythology employed makes use of Christian symbols. The Boar which represents the hunt is used to symbolize Satan. The principle conflict in the story is between the flesh and the spirit, similar to such conflicts in Christian literature of the Middle Ages. Shakespeare employs the traditional temptations to test both the spirit and the flesh. The Christian significance is emphasized when Adonis becomes the Spirit and rejects the world of the flesh represented by Venus. The poem is symbolized in the *Song of Songs* and makes use of the admonition in Galatians (v. 17) to follow the Spirit and "not fulfill the lust of the flesh." Shakespeare's theme is almost identical with a statement in the same verse of Galatians: "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other. . . ."

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FOLGER PRIZE ABSTRACT

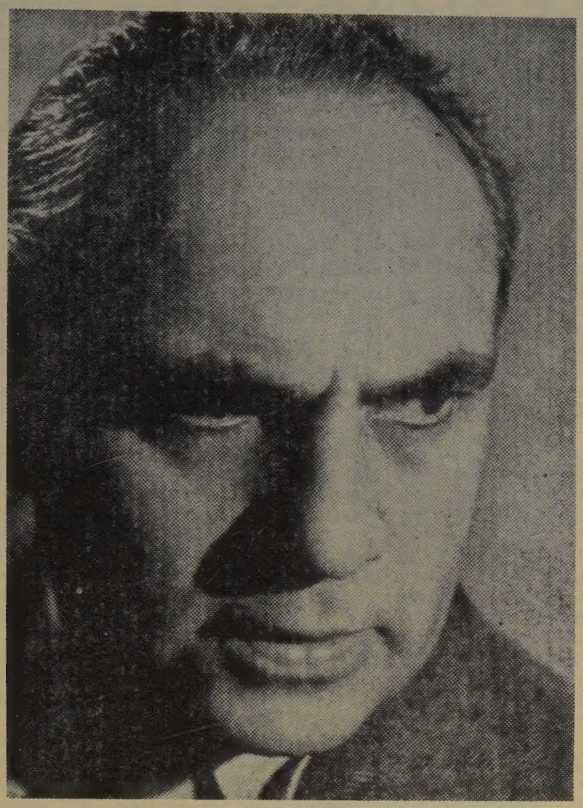
Because award winner Col. William F. Friedman suffered a heart attack shortly before the Folger awards were announced, we are unable to present an abstract of his manuscript at the present time. Readers will join in wishing the Colonel a speedy recovery.

An abstract of Dr. Roland M. Frye's Honorable Mention manuscript follows:

ROMEO AND JULIET: A Tragedy of Self-Damnation

Roland Mushat Frye, Emory University

The play has been examined in terms of a meticulous collection of Shakespeare's patterns of words and actions with the accepted interpretations applied to the same words and actions during Elizabethan and early Stuart times. As a result, a new historical understanding of the play is proposed which is radically different from the conventional romantic conception of a pure and beautiful though ill-advised, love. It would appear from the numerous renaissance treatments of love and marriage which are cited, that the audience for which Shakespeare wrote would have regarded this "love" as lust, the marriage as little better than "fornicaiton sealed with an oath," and would have seen the entire proceeding as a course of degradation leading to ultimate self-damnation in the double suicide. Throughout, the author's attempt is to reconstruct the reaction of Shakespeare's contemporaries, and not to supply an "original" critique.



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King John, ed. by E. A. J. Honigmann, New Arden Edition, Harvard Univ. Press, pp. IXXV, 176, 1954.

In line with a recent tendency to push back the beginnings of Shakespeare's dramatic career, the editor of the New Arden *King John* would date the play in 1590. He argues, moreover, that Shakespeare's source was not *The Troublesome Raigne of John King of England*, a two part play printed in 1591, as has always been held, but that that play is rather a corrupt text of a play written in imitation of Shakespeare's. For *King John* he holds that Shakespeare went directly to Holinshed, Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, the *Historia Maior* of Matthew of Paris and two Latin chronicles which could only have been available to him in manuscript.

Space will not permit the detailed examination which Honigmann's arguments deserve. Only a few of his contentions can be noted, and those very briefly. Almost all of Honigmann's arguments as to date and source rest upon the initial assumption that Shakespeare's is the earlier play, and his conclusions about date and source are in turn used to support that assumption in a kind of circular argument. The weight of external evidence for a 1590 date is hardly imposing. Parallels with other works, although interesting, in their cumulative effect fail to convince. That with *The Spanish Tragedy* is perhaps the strongest. The supposed contact between *John* II,ii,52 and stanza 12 of Daniel's *Complaint of Rosamund* is a commonplace of the age which can be found closely approximated in Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* (II i, 487). A principal argument rests upon certain parallels between *King John* and the Braynes-Burbage quarrel which came to a head in a 1590 lawsuit. If Shakespeare, however, intended his play to parallel the most significant political problem of contemporary England — as most critics, including Honigmann, have recognized — it is difficult to believe that the play would be made also to parallel a petty theatrical squabble, with which we have no evidence that anyone outside the theatre was familiar. To do this would be to burlesque the serious historical function of the play, and there is little reason to believe that the parallels are more than coincidental.

That *King John* is more accurate in some details than *The Troublesome Raigne* means less than Honigmann supposes, for Shakespeare may well have corrected his primary source by reference to Holinshed. From what we know of his habits of composition — as evidenced, for instance, in his handling of the old *Leir* play — it is inconceivable that Shakespeare would not have consulted other versions of the story, but this is no evidence that *The Troublesome Raigne* was not his primary source.

Honigmann further points out that *The Troublesome Raigne* is a virtual patchwork of lines borrowed from the work of other dramatists, and he argues also that the author must have known Shakespeare's play. If this be so, it is very difficult to explain the fact that only two lines are identical in the two plays. It would be a strange plagiarist indeed who would borrow wholesale from unrelated plays by Marlowe and Greene, but limit himself to a mere two lines from the play he was imitating. If anything, I believe that Honigmann greatly underestimates the literary merits of *The Troublesome Raigne*.

Honigmann's arguments are presented clearly and forcefully, and they cannot be dismissed lightly. They raise issues which must be considered by all future students of the play. To this reviewer, however, they seem unproven and to raise even greater difficulties than the much simpler hypothesis that *The Troublesome Raigne* was the principal source of Shakespeare's *King John*.

Honigmann closely follows the Folio text which he holds was printed from Shakespeare's foul papers which underwent some printing house interference. The usual high standards of the Arden texts are maintained.

Irving Ribner — *Tulane University*

Dr. Ribner writes often on Shakespeare's histories. He is currently completing a book on the Tudor history play.

CURRENT BIBLIOGRAPHY

Lewis, C. S. English Literature in the Sixteenth Century excluding Drama, New York, Oxford University Press, (Oxford, Clarendon Press). 1954, pp. 696, $7.00

This third volume of the Oxford History of English Literature is not a generalized view of the literature of the period but rather Lewis's interpretation of it. It is a critical history rather than a synthetic one. Chronology and biography are little stressed, but yet the large volume is able to cover a great deal by excluding drama.

Lewis sets up three overlapping literary periods: Later Medieval, to 1553, characterized by metrical irregularity and allegory; the Drab Age, to the late 70's, characterized by little richness of sound or image; and the Golden Age to the end of the century, characterized by emotional overtones, music, and variety. Overlapping the last is a sophisticated period characterized by "growing difficulty, [and] decreasing obviousness."

There is much of interest in this volume, but only the Shakespeare portions will be discussed. Shakespeare is everywhere a standard of comparison and he stands out in all fields. But *Venus and Adonis* is to him a failure.. Its passion "sometimes sickens us . . . . Words and images" which "ought to have been avoided [sweating, glutton, etc.,] keep on coming in." Disgust should not be relied on in a moral poem. *The Rape of Lucrece* is better, and the sonnets - not full-blown pederasty and later than Hotson thinks - are "the highest and purest achievment of the Golden way of writing." Content and background mean little to Lewis to whom language and style seem to be the sole measure. He would not give a farthing to know the identity of the rival poet or the dark lady. Yet Lewis is no mean critic and his insights and interpretations are important. A thirty-four page Chronological Table, a well-classified Bibliography of ninety-one pages, and a ten page Index complete the volume.

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Guthrie, Tyrone, Davies, Robertson, MacDonald, Grant, Renown at Stratford, Toronto 5, Canada, Clarke, Irwin & Co., 1953, pp. 127, $3.50.

Guthrie, Davies, MacDonald, Twice Have the Trumpets Sounded, Toronto, Clarke, Irwin, 1954, pp. 193, $4.00.

Festivals and plays have a way of being recorded only in tradition, reminiscense, and scrapbooks. The founders of the Stratford Shakepearean Festival in Canada, however, need have no fears about its venture. The production of these beautiful volumes has given permanence and beauty to the record. Its essays provide food for thought for those who have seen the plays and for all lovers of Shakespeare.

Both volumes have extremely interesting and provocative essays by Dr. Guthrie who records in his trenchant and often humorous manner the interesting history and development of the Festival through its trials and tribulations; its committees, finances, tents; its difficulties in getting shoes and hats; the sex life of the sparrows living over the rehearsal stage. Here is revealed Dr. Guthrie's strong faith in the arena type stage and amphitheatre, his hope that the Festival will become completely Canadian, and his opposition to the "vultures" who would capitalize on the Festival crowds. In the second volume Guthrie extends his interesting comments on drama as ritual. " . . . the Theatre makes its effect," he declares, "not by means of illusion but by Ritual . . . . Action on the stage is a stylized reenactment of real action, which is then imagined by the audience. The re-enactment is not merely an imitation but a symbol of the real thing."

In both volumes Robertson Davies give us remarkably vivid descriptions of Tyrone Guthrie in action as a director. From the same pen comes the major portion of each volume. Mr. Davies' comments on the plays as not, thankfully, those of a first night critic but those of a Shakespeare lover who has seen the plays grow and develop. He writes *con amore* evoking the fesitval plays by means of character sketches, both critical and historical, which accompany the 24 beautiful drawn and colored drawings in the first volume. In the second volume the plays are treated as units and the text is improved by not being written to specifically accompany any one of the 30 colored plates in the volume. We saw the second festival and readily testify to the accuracy of MacDonald's drawings. A superb coloring technique makes each print worthy of framing. In the first volume there is a stylized drawing of the stage and amphitheatre; in the second nothing but portraits. More drawings of the actors on the full stage would have enhanced the volume. While the portraits are extremely interesting they give virtually no conception of the plays in production. These attractive volumes are enduring souvenirs of a great and praiseworthy venture.

The Society for Theatre Research, London

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Digests of

CRITICAL REVIEWS

Henry Alden, Librarian, Grinnell College

Prouty, Charles Tyler. The Contention and Shakespeare's 2 Henry VI: A Comparative Study. New Haven, Conn., Yale University Press, 1954. $4.00.

Professor Prouty's study of *II Henry VI and The Contention*... represents the third determined attack in as many years against the memorial reconstruction theory as. . .applied to the 'Bad Quartos.' Neither of the earlier studies has been well received. The publishers of the present work declare that 'The evidence produced and the conclusions reached mark this as an important book....' If I were able to accept Professor Prouty's conclusions, I would agree that this is a most important book, one of far-reaching implications. Disagreeing as I must, it is still, I believe, a valuable study since it calls attention to certain characteristic stigmata of play revision which hitherto have not received sufficient attention.... In the chapter on 'Revision' . . . in many ways the best part of the study, Professor Prouty discusses certain characteristics of revision as it was practiced in *The Spanish Tragedy* and *The Book of Sir Thomas More* and as similar textual phenomena seem to present themselves in the relations between Q and F." Because "of the closely analogous relations between *The True Tragedie*... and *III Henry VI*...one cannot in my view explain *The Contention* in one way and *The True Tragedie* in another, and Professor Prouty's failure to take *The True Tragedie* into account in proposing his theory of *The Contention* is to me one of the most serious weaknesses of his study as a whole."

G. Blakemore Evans *J. Engl & Germ Philol,* LIII:4 (Oct. '54), 628-37.

Garrett, John (Editor). Talking of Shakespeare. London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1954. 20s

The twelve lecture-essays in this book were delivered at Stratford between 1948 and 1953 to teachers who had come "to be assured that Shakespeare was approachable, not as a series of examination texts but as a set of plays for a theatre. . . . The talks" are "a nice compromise between the essay manner and the spoken word. . . .Although, at the end, one may not know a lot more about Shakespeare, one is exhilarated and ready to talk. . . .The wittiest writer. . .is Mr. Paul Dehn, whose subject is the filming of Shakespeare. . . .One of the most urbane and illuminating essays is Mr. Norman Marshall's on 'Shakespeare Abroad,' his experience in half-a-dozen countries. . . .Some of the other talks read less well than they may have sounded. . . .The book is rich in enthusiasm. Even though the performances at night may do more good than the lectures in the morning, we hope that Mr. Garrett will keep the work in train."

Anonymous — *Times* (London) *Lit Sup,* no. 2744 (Sept. 3 '54), 551.

Whitaker, Virgil K. Shakespeare's Use of Learning: An Inquiry into the Growth of his Mind and Art. San Marino, California, The Huntington Library, 1953. $6.50.

"The novelty of this study lies in its emphasis upon Shakespeare's habits of composition. His use of learning and not its extent is the object of investigation. Beginning with the earliest dramas, Dr. Whitaker finds Shakespeare depending closely on school learning, upon new literary fashions, and upon traditional religious instruction . . . . As his art developed, Shakespeare grew more eclectic and more high handed in his treatment of his sources, while he also became more deeply involved in speculation . . . The picture of a developing mind is the most valuable thing in this book. The chief defect is that the author becomes so interested in working out each stage . . . that he does not always relate it very clearly to the progress of the general argument . . . . Pleasant little asides and a certain ease of style temper the gravity of this useful and learned work."

M. C. Bradbrook *R of Engl Stud,* n. s. V:20 (Oct. '54), 413-4.

Everitt, E. B. The Young Shakespeare. (Anglistica, Vol. II.) Copenhagen, Rosenkilde and Bagger, 1954. 27.50 Da. Kr.

"This, the second. . .of the Anglistica monograph series, concerns the early London life of . . .Shakespeare. It is an effort to establish largely by handwriting, partly also by stylistic traits, that the dramatist began his years in London as a 'noverint,' or penman of legal documents, later composed a still existing handwritten letter to Ned Alleyn, and became author and scribe of *Edmond Ironside,* a 'True Chronicle History,' which is also preserved in manuscript form.... The author finally attributes to Shakespeare the earlier *King Leir,* the *Ur-Hamlet"* and seven other plays, "with minor works in the offing.... If we accept the conclusions confidently set forth, we must acclaim this book the most important twentieth - century contribution of our knowledge of the poet's life and writings. The difficulty is that every step in the process of argument rests on questionable interpretation of evidence so that the total effect is a house built upon the sand of fancy."

Robert Adger *Law J Engl & Germ Philol,* LIII:4 (Oct. '54,) 624-8.

A more complete study based on fuller investigation is to be published in book form."

Anonymous *Col Eng,* XVI:3 (Dec. '54), 199.

Elliott, G. R. Flaming Minister: A Study of Othello. Durham, North Carolina, Duke University Press, 1953. $4.50.

Mr. Elliott "seeks to base his new interpretation on a belief that Shakespearian tragedy is essentially a tragedy of pride, and *Othello,* being 'Shakespeare's greatest achievement in tragi-dramatic *form* . . . is his main drama of pride.' ... Mr. Elliott certainly makes it clear that pride has a part in the nature of almost every character in *Othello,* but his long and painstaking analysis of the text does not provide what would be required to make this more than an obvious statement—a proof that pride is the most important motive in each case.... Misinterpretations and strained interpretations abound throughout the book.... Finally, it must be said that the prose-style...is objectionably overwrought."

G. K. Hunter *R of Engl Stud,* n. s., VI:21 (Jan. '55), 82-3.

Lascelles, Mary. Shakespeare's Measure for Measure. N. Y., De Graff, 1954. $3.00.

"Miss Lascelles has read all the critics; but she gives no resume of the critical controversies. Polemics above all are no part of her aim. Instead, without sacrificing the privileges of the informed scholar, she contrives to push the critics into the background, while subjecting her mind, alert but receptive, to the impression of the play itself. In the fullest—and unquestionably the best—study that we have of it, she travels patiently 'alongside the play,' scene by scene, recording but not prejudging the impact of each detail as it occurs.... An excellent, if brief, discussion of the nature of tragi-comedy...brings ...the whole play into focus."

Harold Jenkins *R of Engl Stud, n. s.,* V:20 Oct. '54), 409-11.

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MORE STAGE BUSINESS

In the light of material in promptbooks like those of Phelps, Macready-Davenport, James Taylor, and Barry Sullivan, Arthur Colby Sprague has supplemented his chronicling of theatrical performances and traditions since the appearance of *Shakespeare and the Actors.* Material has been collected from a wide variety of other sources too: from Dekker's *Satiromastix,* in which parallels with *Hamlet* suggest that the portraits Hamlet shows the Queen are miniatures; from the mention in *Quentin Durward* of Richard III's traditionally fingering his sword or dagger; and from pictures of comtemporary theatrical life like Mrs. Ritchie's *Mimic Life* (1856), with its comment upon the First Gravedigger's traditionally removing several waistcoats before beginning to work. Manuals of acting like *The Art of Speaking* (1761) seem to base their prescriptions upon the great performances of the recent past. Many of our own traditions, such as the crown of straw employed in *Lear,* Act IV, and Hamlet's catching sight of Polonius in the scene with Ophelia, are very old. Others, such as Hamlet's crawling toward his father in the play scene, or the excessive business for the witches in *Macbeth,* taken from Davenant's version, have been pretty well abandoned. [*The Stage Business in Shakespeare's Plays: A Postscript,* Pub. for, and available only to, the members of the Society for Theatre Research (Pamphlet Series No. 3; 1953), 1954, pp.35.]

ETERNAL LAW AND THE LEAR UNIVERSE

Rejecting as "nothing less than wrongheaded" the critical view of Lear as a "pagan drama" J. L. Rosier of Stanford University examines the "Elizabethan habit of mind as it refers to Lear," a habit of mind conceiving of the Universe as governed by the *lex aeterna,* set forth (according to Hooker) by God for man to follow. If man's reason, distorted by weakness, is unable to function as the guiding principle of his actions, what then? "This," says Professor Rosier, "is the problem which *King Lear* at once raises and answers." In this universe, man's freedom stops with the action—the consequences of that action (sin) are the inevitable consequences of disturbing the "divine order" by voluntary preference of "a lesser good to a greater good," a choice made possible only as pride (inordinate self-love), an irrational element, usurps the place of reason. Only by self-examination and return to conformity with the *lex aeterna* can a man escape the damnation of "conflict and misery." In the Lear Universe, "Reason, Custom, Law and Restraint are the positive verbal motifs." To rebel against these is to rebel against oneself. As *Lear* opens, Lear is at that point in life when the consequences of his own self-ignorance are catching up with him, the evil in Regan and Goneril and Edmund, released by his own action, being merely the external occasion for "the cataclysmic consequences" of Lear's "injustice and lack of restraint." His tragic flaw is irrascibility. Through suffering the internal and external tempest, Lear is left "naked before the truth," and "from the self-realization of the King and Cordelia's love emerge peace as opposed to raging passion, tranquillity in place of disruption." Professor Rosier concludes that *King Lear* "is the drama of the inevitable consequences in all areas of life, which follow from man's failure to live by the dictates of reason." [The *Lex Aeterna* and 'King Lear,' *Journal of English and Germanic Philology.* LIII:4 (October 1954), 574-580.]

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ARTIST VS. ACTOR-PIRATE

In opposition to the hypothesis that "striking recurrence of a single word" in a Shakespearean Quarto is suggestive evidence of an actor-pirate's "special liking for that word," K. B. Danks concludes, upon examination of the recurrence (18 times) of the word "strange" in the F1 *Macbeth* (there being no Quarto text of this play), that "this invocation of "strange" is essentially artistic" and that it is reasonable to explain similarly the "striking recurrence of other words, in other dramas, both in Quarto and in Folio texts." ["Macbeth and the Word 'Strange,' " *Notes and Queries,* N. S. I:10 (October 1954), 425.]

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SHAKESPEARE'S BURLESQUING OF SHAKESPEARE

Ernest Schanzer of the University of Liverpool offers additional evidence in support of Professor S. B. Hemingway's hypothesis (in *Modern Language Notes,* XXVI, p. 80 "that in the Pyramus and Thisbe play Shakespeare was burlesquing his own tragic treatment of a similar story in 'Romeo and Juliet.' " This additional evidence is the fact that the Lion's comment at the end of the"lamentable comedy" ("The wall is down that parted their fathers") seems to be an unwitting reference to the "Romeo and Juliet" plot, inasmuch as in onlv one of the several versions of the Pyramus and Thisbe story apparently consulted by Shakespeare is the separation of the lovers motivated by rancour between their families, and in none is there reference to "reconciliation between the fathers after their children's death." [" 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' and 'Romeo and Juliet,' " *Notes and Queries,* N. S. 2:1 (January 1955), 13-14.]

A PIONEER IN STAGING

The original Introduction by Granville-Barker from the sumptuous producers' edition of seven of the plays, called *The Players' Shakespeare,* contains many ideas later developed in his famous series of *Prefaces.* He was one of the first producers to claim (1) that even minor changes in the text of a play could have *serious* consequences during performance, (2) that act and scene divisions are relatively unimportant, (3) and that intermissions should be cut to a minimum. Scenery, costumes, or stage effects which compete with or distract from the visualising power of Shakespeare's language should be forbidden. Proof of this power can be seen especially in the case of the boy players. Since his language itself has the evocative power for which a modern actress usually relies upon physical presence and feminine resourcefulness, Shakespeare's heroines may well have been more effective, in terms of a play's total meaningfulness, when acted by boys. We should attempt to restore the Elizabethan intimacy between actor and audience, in which, "As there was no illusion there was every illusion." Acting is best served by the dramatist (rather than any kind of designer), "who confides his play's every interest to its care." ["The Granville-Barker Shakespeare," *The Shakespeare Stage,* No. 2 (September 1953), pp. 9-24.]
(January 1955), 45-48.]

A SOURCE FOR GLOUCESTER'S ATTEMPTED SUICIDE

Kenneth Muir calls attention to the account in Holinshed's *Chronicles* "two pages before the Leir story" of a wrestling match between Corine and Gogmagog that may have suggested "the episode of Gloucester's attempted suicide" in *King Lear* IV. 6. ["King Lear IV.6," *Notes and Queries,* N. S, II:1 (January 1955), 15.]

LAMB'S TRAGIC MALVOLIO

In Lamb's essay "On Some of the Old Actors," he discusses the acting of the part of Malvolio by Bensley. Supporting himself by what he remembers of Bensley's playing of the role, Lamb declares that Malvolio has a tragic interest. Sylvan Barnet of Harvard University attacks Lamb's interpretation, which has been so often repeated, and which has greatly effected the stage history of the play. In the first place, there is no indication that Malvolio was sympathetically regarded by earlier critics or actors, or (with the possible exception of Hazlitt) by other 19th century critics. Moreover, Bensley seems not to have acted Malvolio as Lamb says he did. Bensley's contemporaries liked him in the part, but all the evidence indicates that they found him comic, "that his Malvolio was a grotesque figure, not a comic one." Mr. Barnet thinks that Lamb is giving us, not Bensley's Malvolio, but his own interpretation. Since Lamb was only twenty-one when the actor retired from the stage, Lamb could not have been a mature critic when he last saw Bensley's Malvolio, and he did not write his essay until more than a quarter century had passed. Lamb's sympathy for Malvolio, Mr. Barnet suggests tentatively, may have been influenced by the fact that Lamb's own father had been, like Malvolio, a household servant. ["Charles Lamb and the Tragic Malvolio," *Philological Quarterly,* XXXIII:2 (April 1954), 178-188.]